United Nations

A/51/PV.1

General Assembly

Fifty-first Session

Official Records

1st plenary meeting
Tuesday, 17 September 1996, 3 p.m.
New York

Temporary President: Mr. Freitas do Amaral . . . . . (Portugal)

The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Opening of the session by the Chairman of the delegation of Portugal

The Temporary President: I declare open the fifty-first session of the General Assembly.

Item 2 of the provisional agenda

Minute of silent prayer or meditation

The Temporary President: Before calling on representatives to observe a minute of silent prayer or meditation in accordance with rule 62 of the rules of procedure, I propose that as we do so we also observe the International Day of Peace, on this third Tuesday of September, as proclaimed by the General Assembly in its resolution 36/67 of 30 November 1981, to be devoted to commemorating and strengthening the ideals of peace both within and among all nations and peoples.

I now invite representatives to stand and observe one minute of silent prayer or meditation.

The members of the General Assembly observed a minute of silent prayer or meditation.

Item 121 of the provisional agenda

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (A/51/366)

The Temporary President: Before turning to the next item on our agenda, I should like, in keeping with the established practice, to invite the attention of the General Assembly to document A/51/366, which has been circulated in the General Assembly Hall this afternoon. It contains a letter addressed to me by the Secretary-General in which he informs the Assembly that nine Member States are in arrears in the payment of their financial contributions to the United Nations within the terms of Article 19 of the Charter.

I should like to remind delegations that, under Article 19 of the Charter,

> "A Member of the United Nations which is in arrears in the payment of its financial contributions to the Organization shall have no vote in the General Assembly if the amount of its arrears equals or exceeds the amount of the contributions due from it for the preceding two full years."

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of this information?

It was so decided.

96-86199 (E)

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Item 3 of the provisional agenda

Credentials of representatives to the fifty-first session of the General Assembly

(a) Appointment of the members of the Credentials Committee

The Temporary President: Rule 28 of the rules of procedure provides that the General Assembly at the beginning of each session shall appoint, on the proposal of the President, a Credentials Committee consisting of nine members.

Accordingly, it is proposed that, for the fifty-first session, the Credentials Committee should consist of the following Member States: China, the Dominican Republic, Gabon, the Netherlands, Paraguay, the Philippines, the Russian Federation, Sierra Leone and the United States of America.

May I take it that the States I have mentioned are hereby appointed members of the Credentials Committee?

It was so decided.

Item 4 of the provisional agenda

Election of the President of the General Assembly

The Temporary President: I now invite members of the General Assembly to proceed to the election of the President of the fifty-first session of the General Assembly.

May I recall that, in accordance with paragraph 1 of the annex to General Assembly resolution 33/138, the President of the General Assembly at the fifty-first session should be elected from among the Asian States.

In this connection, I have been informed by the Chairman of the Group of Asian States that the Group has endorsed the candidacy of His Excellency Mr. Razali Ismail of Malaysia for the presidency of the General Assembly.

Taking into account the provisions of paragraph 16 of annex VI to the rules of procedure, I therefore declare His Excellency Mr. Razali Ismail of Malaysia elected President of the General Assembly at its fifty-first session by acclamation.

I extend my sincere congratulations to His Excellency Mr. Razali Ismail, and I invite him to assume the presidency.

I request the Chief of Protocol to escort the President to the podium.

Mr. Razali Ismail took the Chair.

Address by Mr. Razali Ismail, President of the General Assembly at its fifty-first session

The President (spoke in Malay; English text furnished by the delegation of Malaysia): I am indeed appreciative of and grateful for the trust and confidence the members of delegations placed in me by giving me the mandate to head the fifty-first session of the United Nations General Assembly as its President. I would like to take this opportunity to extend my appreciation to His Excellency Mr. Diogo Freitas do Amaral, President of the recently concluded fiftieth session of the General Assembly, for having led the fiftieth session in an extremely effective and professional manner.

I wish to extend a very warm welcome to all members of delegations to the fifty-first regular session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, commencing 17 September 1996 and continuing to 23 December 1996. It is my fervent hope that this fifty-first session will be conducted in a congenial atmosphere with mutual respect and cooperation. I am confident that with hard work, dedication and commitment, our efforts will be rewarded with results that will benefit all humankind.

(spoke in English)

I am deeply humbled by this occasion, and by the great honour to my country, Malaysia. My assumption of the presidency of the fifty-first session of the General Assembly reflects the Assembly's acknowledgement of Malaysia's involvement in, and contribution to, multilateral affairs, and in particular to the United Nations. Malaysia's involvement has become particularly pronounced under Prime Minister Mr. Mahathir Mohamad.

Many speeches have been made in this Assembly that eulogize the purposes and principles of the Charter and entreat Member States to commit to them. Yet despite great strides made with decolonization and the elimination of apartheid, those purposes and principles remain today largely unrealized. The world is plagued by

multiple expressions of inequality that continue to perpetuate human misery and entrench deprivation. A world not yet free of nuclear weapons has to contend with the re-emergence of ethnic and religious enmity, combining with poverty and environmental degradation to elevate global insecurity to explosive levels.

The interconnectedness of our world is accepted by us, but this Assembly still bears witness to gross injustice in many dimensions of human life. At this time of incredible scientific discovery, when our knowledge and means allow us to seek a common destiny based on common interests, the international community fails in its determination to overcome these global problems.

As representatives of 185 Member States, we need to examine why we continue to fail in overcoming the narrow boundaries of our national interests and neglect to deliver our promises of a better world. Perhaps such expectations of the international community are too unrealistic, and the ideals of the Charter too lofty, so that they defy realization.

The General Assembly begins its fifty-first session without celebration but amidst criticism of the United Nations inability to respond adequately to international crises. The United Nations as an Organization faces a financial crisis that threatens to cripple it. The Organization's effectiveness is seen to be hampered by allegations of mismanagement and inefficiency and a dysfunctional institutional framework. The cries for reform do not originate only from Member States but are voiced in equal measure by world opinion outside. The United Nations not only has to grapple with systemic problems but faces even greater difficulties when its role and abilities are examined against the backdrop of global events and emerging trends.

As I take on the presidency, I need to draw upon my last eight years as Malaysia's Permanent Representative. I hope they stand me in good stead, enabling me to understand the ecosystem of the United Nations, and to have friends and colleagues with a common purpose within the intergovernmental system, the Secretariat community and civil society outside. I need their help, and I extend my appeal to them for all that I have to do as President.

As in the past, we have a provisional agenda which, for this session, has 163 items so far, ranging from those dealing with the peace and security agenda to those dealing with development — including development assistance — human rights, women, youth and drugs, *inter alia*. In addressing these important items, I hope that the syndrome of "business as usual" will be discarded. What we do here at this Assembly, at great expense, is being given critical scrutiny outside. Clearly, what we produce from our deliberations must matter, must make a difference. Our sense of purpose and work methods are being questioned. The occasions of long delays and long lunches which lead to more delays, at enormous cost, are over. So, too, I trust, is the torture of long, unfocused speeches in the Committees.

At this fifty-first session, the General Assembly will be involved in selecting a Secretary-General. I am confident that the Assembly, representing the larger membership, in cooperation with the Security Council, will play a constructive role and, with wisdom and impartiality, will determine a course of action that will protect and enhance the integrity of the institution of the United Nations.

The special session on the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development will also be an important event for the fifty-first General Assembly. For this occasion, it is not enough for us to take a hard critical look at the decisions made in Rio de Janeiro. The United Nations has a special responsibility for operationalizing sustainable development. Decisions from this review must demonstrate the delivery capacity of the United Nations, and delegates would be failing in their duty if the consensus we arrived at were seen as empty of significance and content. If the United Nations cannot be the main player in development resources, it must at least be the main development catalyst, and one that can strongly influence coordination at the macro level with other bodies that have more access to resources, but that are less democratically set up.

On disarmament, the General Assembly should benefit from the recent development pertaining to the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty. Given the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty and the important Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legality of nuclear weapons, nuclear disarmament will now be at centre stage of General Assembly consideration, with expected outcomes that must benefit the aspirations of humanity.

Items pertaining to social development, including such issues as human rights, women, children, the disabled and the dispossessed are equally important. No less significant are the situation in the Middle East and current developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina and

many other parts of the world, whether in Africa, Asia or Latin America, which deserve our attention. Africa and the least-developed countries demand our special consideration as well.

During the fifty-first session of the General Assembly I look forward to facilitating the greater involvement of members of civil society in our work, building upon the success of the Economic and Social Council. The non-governmental organizations are agents of multilateralism at the grass-roots level, where forces of change often take root. We must benefit from their wisdom and their contribution. Their involvement will not erode the intergovernmental process. On the contrary, it will strengthen it.

Member States of the United Nations must decide whether the principles of multilateral cooperation have value or not. If they do, we must determine the ways and means of articulating the form and process of such cooperation. Central to this is whether the United Nations is the appropriate institution. This in turn is related to the nature and value system of our societies, projecting into the future. We should ask: Have the ideals of social justice and compassion diminished to the extent that national self-interest no longer requires us to deal with the needs of others? Can Member States disengage from the threats and misery of the world in the context of self-interest? Looking around us, it is clear that an array of non-military threats to human security continues to confront us. Global problems such as environmental degradation and pollution, the spread of infectious diseases, the international trafficking in drugs, organized crime, the mass movement of peoples and the crisis of environmental and social sustainability require global solutions. These phenomena and the forces that impel them cross national boundaries, affect whole populations, cannot be ameliorated by military means, and require international cooperation for their resolution.

The strong links between peace, development and human security are embodied in the United Nations Charter itself. The globalization of trade and the movement of capital and markets around the world have not bridged the growing disparity in wealth between the poor and the rich. This gap grows wider both between and within nations.

It is in the role of improving the economic and social conditions of people that the United Nations should assert itself more aggressively. This is also a role that is most daunting, and one where results have been meagre. National Governments are losing their political room to manoeuvre because of growing economic pressures and demands that can turn them into agents of the global marketplace and diminish the State's autonomy as an effective global actor. The United Nations can play a critical role in identifying the resources for poor developing countries and assessing the social impact of the world economic order by ensuring overall policy coordination between the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization. The United Nations should also monitor the activities of transnational companies, which wield so much power.

The intergovernmental process as practised in the United Nations faces the problem of reconciling the contradictory impulses of upholding global norms and universal rights with the requirements of protecting sovereignty. The participation of civil-society actors in the United Nations could mitigate power politics and could relieve the tensions between the dictates of universality and national sovereignty.

A hard look should be given to the laborious nature of consensus decision-making, which frequently rests on the lowest common denominator. Maybe representatives to the United Nations are too distant from the problems they are charged to address, and the camaraderie of diplomatic life has softened the edges of critical judgement. It is a moot point whether we should delegate the solution of global problems to international diplomacy alone. International diplomacy does not seem to deal with the critical time factor. Months if not years pass before international agreements are negotiated and implemented. Environmental destruction, for example, which can lead to serious contamination or deforestation, is faster than the political potential for protection and implementation. Also, we must not allow ourselves to cast about for so-called solutions at the United Nations that will merely keep our own power and standards of living intact when we are determining the fate and livelihood of others.

The United Nations must begin to embed itself in reality and push the critical issues, especially poverty and social injustice, to the centre of national and public debate. What will it take to do this? Of immediate need is political will by Member States to commit to the principles of democracy and accountability. The nature of democratic practice needed for such an enterprise is one based on careful deliberation and consultation so that compromise to the lowest value is minimized in favour of optimizing the best options that will protect universal values.

The reform process must begin with finding a political consensus on what the United Nations should be and what it can do. A coherent and feasible strategy for the future, a narrower mandate, committed resources and streamlined priorities, combined with responsible and inspired leadership, are prerequisites in this process to achieve a relevant and vital United Nations for the future.

I humbly urge all Member States to seize this moment for substantial change and to imbue this opportunity with constructiveness, in a spirit of tolerance and compromise. I extend this appeal also to the Secretariat of the United Nations, maligned and unappreciated but on which the intergovernmental process strongly depends. It is my view that there can be no real serious reform of the United Nations without both Member States and the Secretariat coming together at an early stage to determine a common premise for reform or for undertaking major initiatives. Lessons must be learnt from recent events, or the United Nations as a whole will be the casualty.

The United Nations, finally, is not a world government. In a sense, an association of States has come together to make the United Nations a global institution to serve the interests of all, extending beyond Governments, drawing creative energies from the world's diversity itself. The fate of the United Nations depends primarily on how much its Members are willing to invest in a viable Organization and on what universal values are strongly held on to. Today, tragedies of huge proportions happen when the United Nations does not stand up to power considerations that undermine universal values. Consider Bosnia and Rwanda. The onus lies primarily upon the major Powers. The United Nations cannot be the vessel of power politics. Neither can it be sustained by noble interests and lofty principles alone. We have to construct a critical equilibrium.

The meeting rose at 4 p.m.

United Nations A/51/PV.2

General Assembly
Fifty-first Session

Official Records

2nd plenary meeting
Tuesday, 17 September 1996, 4.25 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Razali Ismail . . . . . (Malaysia)

The meeting was called to order at 4.25 p.m.

Item 5 of the provisional agenda

Election of the officers of the Main Committees

The President: I should like to inform members that the following representatives have been elected Chairmen of the six Main Committees of the Assembly and are accordingly members of the General Committee for the fifty-first session:

First Committee:	Mr. Alyaksandr Sychou (Belarus)
Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee):	Mr. Alounkèo Kittikhoun (Lao People's Democratic Republic)
Second Committee:	Mr. Arjan Hamburger (Netherlands)
Third Committee:	Mrs. Patricia Espinosa (Mexico)
Fifth Committee:	Mr. Ngoni Francis Sengwe (Zimbabwe)
Sixth Committee:	Mr. Ramón Escovar-Salom (Venezuela)

I congratulate the Chairmen on their election.

Item 6 of the provisional agenda

Election of the Vice-Presidents of the General Assembly

The President: Pursuant to rule 31 of the rules of procedure, we shall now proceed to the election of the Vice-Presidents of the General Assembly.

All members of the General Assembly are eligible in this election except those already represented in the General Committee, namely, those countries whose representatives have been elected to the presidency of the General Assembly or to the chairmanships of the Main Committees.

In accordance with paragraphs 2 and 3 of the annex to resolution 33/138, the 21 Vice-Presidents of the General Assembly at its fifty-first session shall be elected according to the following pattern:

(a) Six representatives from African States;

(b) Four representatives from Asian States;

(c) One representative from an Eastern European State;

(d) Three representatives from Latin American and Caribbean States;

96-86205 (E)

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(e) Two representatives from Western European and other States;

and

(f) Representatives of the five permanent members of the Security Council.

In accordance with paragraph 16 of annex VI to the rules of procedure, the election of the Vice-Presidents of the Assembly by secret ballot will be dispensed with when the number of candidates corresponds to the number of seats to be filled. We shall proceed accordingly.

I shall now read out the names of the endorsed candidates:

African States: Angola, Burundi, Ghana, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Niger, Sudan

Asian States: Cyprus, Pakistan, Philippines, United Arab Emirates

Eastern European States: Latvia

Latin American and Caribbean States: Bahamas, Honduras, Paraguay

Western European and other States: Andorra, Turkey

Since the number of candidates corresponds to the number of seats to be filled in each region, I declare those candidates elected, in addition to the representatives of the five permanent members of the Security Council.

The following States have therefore been elected to vice-presidencies of the General Assembly: Andorra, Angola, Bahamas, Burundi, China, Cyprus, France, Ghana, Honduras, Latvia, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Niger, Pakistan, Paraguay, the Philippines, the Russian Federation, Sudan, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate the States which have been elected Vice-Presidents of the General Assembly.

The General Committee for the fifty-first session of the General Assembly has now been fully constituted in accordance with rule 38 of the rules of procedure.

The first meeting of the General Committee will be held tomorrow, Wednesday, 18 September 1996, at 10 a.m. in Conference Room 4.

Letter from the Chairman of the Committee on Conferences (A/51/337)

The President: The Assembly will now turn its attention to document A/51/337, which contains a letter dated 6 September 1996 from the Chairman of the Committee on Conferences addressed to the President of the Assembly.

As members are aware, the Assembly, in paragraph 7 of resolution 40/243, decided that no subsidiary organ of the General Assembly should be permitted to meet at United Nations Headquarters during a regular session of the Assembly unless explicitly authorized by the Assembly.

As indicated in the letter I have just mentioned, the Committee on Conferences has recommended that the General Assembly authorize the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to meet from 16 to 19 September 1996 and also to authorize the Committee on Conferences, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, as well as the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations to meet during the fifty-first session, beginning 19 September 1996.

Bearing in mind that one of the dates overlaps with the fifty-first session of the Assembly, and that the others will take place in two days' time, may I take it that the General Assembly adopts the recommendation of the Committee on Conferences?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 4.30 p.m.

United Nations A/51/PV.3

General Assembly

Official Records

Fifty-first Session

3rd plenary meeting
Friday, 20 September 1996, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Razali Ismail ..... (Malaysia)

The meeting was called to order at 10:30 a.m.

Item 121 of the provisional agenda *(continued)*

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (A/51/366/Add.1)

The President: In a letter contained in document A/51/366/Add.1, the Secretary-General informs me that, since the issuance of his communication dated 17 September 1996, the Dominican Republic has made the necessary payment to reduce its arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter.

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of this information?

It was so decided.

Item 8 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda and organization of work: first report of the General Committee (A/51/250)

The President: With regard to the first report of the General Committee, which has been circulated in document A/51/250, I should like to inform members, with apologies, of a misprint in the Russian and Spanish versions. For the Russian version, pages 9 to 40 have been printed in Spanish. For the Spanish version, pages 9 to 40 have been printed in Russian. Those two language versions will be reissued.

I will refer to specific sections and paragraphs of the report which contain recommendations for consideration by the Assembly.

In paragraph 2 of its report, the General Committee draws the attention of the General Assembly to the provisions reproduced in annexes V, VI, VII and VIII of its rules of procedure.

May I take it that the Assembly takes note of those provisions?

It was so decided.

The President: In paragraph 3, the General Committee took note of General Assembly resolution 48/264 of 29 July 1994, entitled "Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly", and of annex I thereto, entitled "Guidelines on the rationalization of the agenda of the General Assembly". The General Committee also took note of annex I to General Assembly resolution 50/227 of 24 May 1996, entitled "Further measures for the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields". The provisions of the resolutions are reflected in the document before the General Assembly under the relevant headings.

We shall now examine section II of the report, which deals with the organization of the session.

We turn first to section II.B, which deals with the rationalization of work of the General Assembly. In

96-86220 (E)

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paragraph 6, the General Committee draws the attention of the General Assembly to paragraph 5 of the annex to resolution 45/45, regarding certain Main Committees meeting in sequential order, and to paragraph 23 of annex I of resolution 50/227, concerning the discussions in the Second and Third Committees which, to the extent feasible, should not commence until after the end of the general debate in the plenary meetings of the General Assembly.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of paragraph 6?

It was so decided.

The President: In paragraph 7, the General Committee took note of the fact that measures introduced to reduce costs relating to overtime would be strictly enforced.

In section II.C, which relates to the closing date of the fifty-first session, the General Committee recommends to the General Assembly that the fifty-first session recess not later than Tuesday, 17 December 1996 and close on Monday, 15 September 1997.

May I take it that the Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: In the same paragraph, the General Committee further recommends to the Assembly that all the Main Committees should make every effort to complete their work by Friday, 29 November 1996.

May I take it that the Assembly approves this recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: I shall hold all members to that date; we will finish work by 29 November 1996.

Next, we turn to section II.D, which concerns the schedule of meetings. In paragraph 9, the General Committee recommends to the General Assembly that morning meetings should start at 10 a.m. promptly for all plenary meetings and meetings of the Main Committees.

May I take it that the Assembly approves this recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: This is an important commitment on everyone's part and will determine how the course of the work will be done in the fifty-first session. I will hold members to that commitment very strongly.

I should like to remind members that, for the afternoon meetings, I intend to begin promptly at 3 p.m.

In the same paragraph, the General Committee recommends to the Assembly that, as a cost-saving measure, plenary meetings and meetings of the Main Committees, including informal consultations, be adjourned by 6 p.m. and that no meetings be held on weekends. The Committee further recommends to the Assembly that this cost-saving measure should also apply, for the remainder of 1996, to meetings on the calendar of conferences and meetings.

May I take it that the General Assembly approves this recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: In paragraph 10, the General Committee recommends that, in order to avoid the late start of meetings, the General Assembly should waive the requirement of the presence of at least one third of the members to declare a plenary meeting open and permit the debate to proceed, and of at least one quarter of the members to declare a meeting of a Main Committee open and permit the debate to proceed.

May I take it that the General Assembly approves this recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: For that matter, I should like to endorse strongly the practical suggestions that were made at previous sessions, for each delegation to designate someone to be present at scheduled meetings. I genuinely hope that all delegations will cooperate.

In paragraph 11, the General Committee recommends to the General Assembly that delegations should be reminded of the utmost importance of punctuality.

May I take it that the Assembly approves this recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: I sincerely hope that all delegations will make a special effort to cooperate in this regard, so that all meetings can start promptly at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m.

In section II.E, which concerns the general debate, the General Committee recommends that the general debate begin on Monday, 23 September 1996 and end by Friday, 11 October 1996. The General Committee also recommends that the list of speakers in the general debate be closed on Wednesday, 25 September 1996, at 6 p.m.

May I consider that the General Assembly approves the recommendations contained in paragraph 12?

It was so decided.

The President: In view of the very large number of speakers already inscribed, I urge representatives to speak in the general debate in the order in which they appear on the list of speakers. Those who are unable to speak at the scheduled time will be put at the end of the list for that meeting.

In paragraph 13, the General Committee draws the General Assembly's attention to a previous decision of the Assembly to prohibit the practice of expressing congratulations inside the General Assembly Hall after a speech has been delivered. The Committee recommends that this provision should also apply during the fifty-first session.

May I take it that the Assembly approves this recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: The General Committee also recommends to the General Assembly that, after delivering their statements, speakers in the general debate should leave the General Assembly Hall through room GA-200, which is located behind the podium, before returning to their seats.

May I take it that the Assembly approves this recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: We shall now turn to section II.F. May I take it that the Assembly takes note of the provisions concerning explanation of vote and right of reply contained in paragraph 14?

It was so decided.

The President: May I further take it, if there is no objection, that it is the wish of the General Assembly to limit points of order to five minutes, as recommended in paragraph 15?

It was so decided.

The President: May I take it that the Assembly takes note of the provisions regarding the length of statements contained in paragraph 16?

It was so decided.

The President: Section II.G deals with the records of meetings. In paragraph 17, the General Committee took note of the fact that verbatim records would be provided during the fifty-first session for the plenary meetings of the General Assembly and meetings of the First Committee and that summary records would be provided for the meetings of the General Committee and the Main Committees of the Assembly.

May I take it that the Assembly approves the recommendation contained in paragraph 17 concerning transcriptions of the debates of some of the meetings of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)?

It was so decided.

The President: Section II.H concerns concluding statements in the General Assembly and the Main Committees. May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of this section?

It was so decided.

The President: Section II.I concerns resolutions. May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of the provisions contained in paragraphs 19 to 23?

It was so decided.

The President: Section II.J concerns documentation. May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of the provision relating to reports of the Secretary-General or subsidiary organs contained in paragraph 24?

It was so decided.

The President: In paragraph 25, the General Committee draws the attention of the General Assembly to paragraph 6 of its resolution 48/264 and to paragraph 4 of its resolution 50/206 C, which emphasize that documentation should be available in accordance with the six-week rule for the distribution of documents simultaneously in each of the official languages of the United Nations.

May I take it that the Assembly takes note of paragraph 25?

It was so decided.

The President: May I take it that the Secretariat will take note of that obligation? I am sure that the Secretariat will also join us in that undertaking.

In paragraph 26, the General Committee took note of the fact that, despite the provisions adopted by the General Assembly to control and limit documentation, the volume of pre-session documentation had consistently increased in recent years, without any strengthening of resources, thus contributing to serious delays in the issuance of documentation.

In this connection, I urge members of the Assembly to make a special effort during this session, when the Organization faces unprecedented financial constraints, to exercise restraint in making proposals requesting new reports of the Secretary-General, to review with a critical eye the practice of routinely requesting some reports and the possibility of triennializing or deferring some to a later session.

Section II.K refers to questions relating to the programme budget. May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of the provisions contained in paragraphs 27 and 28?

It was so decided.

The President: In paragraph 29, which concerns subparagraph 13 (d) of decision 34/401, the Committee draws the Assembly's attention to the observations of the Secretary-General that the preparation of a statement of programme budget implications by the Secretary-General may take a few days. In addition, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Fifth Committee need adequate time to review the programme budget implications of a draft resolution before the latter can be acted on by the Assembly.

The Secretary-General thus considers it desirable that Member States submit proposals involving statements of programme budget implications sufficiently in advance to avoid the cancellation of meetings and the postponement of consideration of items.

May I take it that the Assembly takes note of the observations of the Secretary-General contained in paragraph 29?

It was so decided.

The President: Section II.L concerns observances and commemorative meetings.

We turn first to paragraph 30. The General Committee recommends that, allowing for the necessary flexibility and with the exception of the anniversary of the United Nations, the General Assembly should adopt the suggested format for commemorative meetings, including limiting each statement to 15 minutes.

May I take it that the Assembly approves the recommendations contained in paragraph 30?

It was so decided.

The President: May I take it that the Assembly also approves the recommendation contained in paragraph 31 regarding the scheduling of observances and commemorative meetings?

It was so decided.

The President: I now invite the General Assembly to turn to section II.M, which refers to special conferences. May I take it that the Assembly approves the recommendations referred to in paragraphs 32 and 33?

It was so decided.

The President: In section II.N, concerning meetings of subsidiary organs, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly, on the strict understanding that meetings would have to be accommodated within available facilities and services, that the subsidiary organs referred to in paragraph 34 be authorized to meet during the main part of the fifty-first session.

May I take it that the General Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: We turn now to section III, which contains observations and proposals on the organization of future sessions of the General Assembly.

In paragraph 36, the General Committee recommends to the General Assembly that it consider whether the rationalization of its meetings between January and August is possible to allow advance planning for delegations and the Secretariat.

May I take it that the General Assembly approves the recommendation contained in paragraph 36?

It was so decided.

The President: We turn now to section IV of the report of the General Committee, relating to the adoption of the agenda. It starts at paragraph 37.

I would first recall rule 23 of the rules of procedure, which provides that:

> "Debate on the inclusion of an item in the agenda, when that item has been recommended for inclusion by the General Committee, shall be limited to three speakers in favour of, and three against, the inclusion."

I should like to stress that at this time we are not discussing the substance of any item.

With regard to paragraph 38, may I consider, if I see no objection, that it is the wish of the Assembly to direct its Main Committees to review their agenda with a view to streamlining their programme of work, as suggested in that paragraph?

It was so decided.

The President: Again, may I urge members of the Assembly to give careful thought to the suggestion by the Secretary-General to consider deferring to a later session items for which decisions or action are not required during the main part of the present session.

In paragraph 39, the General Committee recommends that the consideration of item 92 of the draft agenda, "Question of the Malagasy islands of Glorieuses, Juan de Nova, Europa and Bassas da India", should be deferred to the fifty-second session and that the item should be included in the provisional agenda of that session.

May I take it that the Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: In paragraph 40, the General Committee recommends that the consideration of item 93 of the draft agenda, "Question of East Timor", should be deferred to the fifty-second session and that the item should be included in the provisional agenda of that session.

May I take it that the Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: In respect of paragraph 41, the General Committee decided not to recommend the inclusion of item 159.

In respect of paragraph 42, in connection with item 163, "Advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons", the General Committee recommends its inclusion as a sub-item of item 71 of the draft agenda, "General and complete disarmament".

May I take it that the Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: We turn now to the agenda that the General Committee recommends for adoption by the General Assembly.

In accordance with past practice, we shall follow the numbering given in paragraph 43 of the General Committee's report (A/51/250) and, where it seems appropriate to do so, we shall consider items in groups. I should like to remind members once again that at present we are not discussing the substance of any item, except when such discussion can assist the Assembly in deciding whether or not to include an item in the agenda.

Items 1 to 6 have already been dealt with.

We turn to items 7 to 48. May I remind members that we are dealing only with the question of the inclusion of the items.

May I take it that these items are included in the agenda?

It was so decided.

The President: May I take it that items 49 to 59 are included in the agenda?

It was so decided.

The President: I now invite members to turn to items 60 to 81, relating to disarmament.

May I take it that these items are included in the agenda?

It was so decided.

The President: We now turn to items 82 to 93.

May I take it that these items are included in the agenda?

It was so decided.

The President: Next, we come to items 94 to 99, relating to international economic cooperation. May I take it that these items are included in the agenda?

It was so decided.

The President: Items 100 to 110 relate to social and humanitarian questions. May I take it that these items are also included in the agenda?

It was so decided.

The President: May I take it that items 111 to 141, dealing with administrative and financial questions, are included in the
agenda?

It was so decided.

The President: We now turn to items 142 to 152. If I hear no objection, I will take it that these items are included in the agenda.

It was so decided.

The President: Next we turn to items 153 to 155. May I take it that these items are included in the agenda?

It was so decided.

The President: Item 156 is entitled "Observer status for the International Criminal Police Organization-Interpol in the General Assembly". May I take it that this item is included in the agenda?

It was so decided.

The President: We turn now to item 157, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Support Mission in Haiti". May I take it that this item is included in the agenda?

It was so decided.

The President: Next, we turn to item 158, entitled "Question of elaboration of an international convention against organized transnational crime".

May I take it that the Assembly recommends the inclusion of this item?

It was so decided.

The President: The last item for inclusion is item 159, entitled "Elimination of coercive economic measures as a means of political and economic compulsion".

May I take it that the General Assembly recommends the inclusion of this item?

It was so decided.

The President: We now turn to section V of the report of the General Committee on allocation of items.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of the provisions contained in paragraph 44?

It was so decided.

The President: We shall now turn to the recommendations contained in paragraph 45. We shall take up the recommendations one by one. Before we proceed, may I remind members that the item numbers refer to the agenda in paragraph 43 of the report before us in document A/51/250.

We turn first to the recommendation in paragraph 45 (a) (i) relating to item 19.

May I take it that the General Assembly adopts that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: Next, we turn to the recommendation in paragraph 45 (a) (ii) of the memorandum, which concerns item 49.

May I take it that the General Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: In connection with paragraph 45 (a) (iii) relating to item 58, the Committee recommends that the General Assembly allocate the item at an appropriate time during the session.

May I take it that the General Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: We now turn to the recommendation in paragraph 45 (a) (iv) relating to item 156, entitled "Observer status for the International Criminal Police Organization-Interpol in the General Assembly".

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to consider the item directly in plenary meeting?

It was so decided.

The President: Next, we turn to the recommendation in paragraph 45 (a) (v) relating to item 159, entitled "Elimination of coercive economic measures as a means of political and economic compulsion".

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to consider the item directly in plenary meeting?

It was so decided.

The President: We turn now to the recommendation in paragraph 45 (b) (i) relating to item 71, entitled "General and complete disarmament".

May I take it that the General Assembly approves this recommendation pertaining to item 71?

It was so decided.

The President: We turn now to the recommendation contained in paragraph 45 (b) (ii) relating to item 71 (k), entitled "Advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons".

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly that the item be allocated to the First Committee as a sub-item of item 71?

It was so decided.

The President: We turn now to the recommendation contained in paragraph 45 (c) (i) concerning item 98, entitled "Operational activities for development".

May I take it that the Assembly approves this recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: We turn next to the recommendation contained in paragraph 45 (c) (ii), also concerning item 98, entitled "Operational activities for development".

May I take it that the Assembly approves this recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: We turn now to the recommendation in paragraph 45 (d) (i) relating to item 103, entitled "Advancement of women".

May I take it that the Assembly approves this recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: We next turn to paragraph 45 (d) (ii) relating to item 158, entitled "Question of elaboration of an international convention against organized transnational crime".

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to allocate the item to the Third Committee?

It was so decided.

The President: We turn now to paragraph 45 (e) (i)

relating to item 120, entitled "Human resources management".

May I take it that the Assembly approves this recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: We turn now to paragraph 45 (e) (ii) relating to item 157, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Support Mission in Haiti"?

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to allocate this item to the Fifth Committee?

It was so decided.

The President: I now invite members to turn to the list of items recommended by the General Committee for consideration in plenary meeting.

Taking into account the decisions just adopted, may I consider that the General Assembly approves the allocation of the items listed in paragraph 46 of the report of the General Committee for consideration directly in plenary meeting?

It was so decided.

The President: We come now to the list of items which the General Committee has recommended for allocation to the First Committee.

Taking into account the decisions just adopted, may I take it that the General Assembly approves the allocation of the items proposed for the First Committee in paragraph 46 of the report of the General Committee?

It was so decided.

The President: We turn now to the list of items which the General Committee recommends for allocation to the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee).

Taking into account the decisions just adopted, may I consider that the General Assembly approves the allocation of the items proposed for the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) in paragraph 46 of the report of the General Committee?

It was so decided.

The President: We come now to the list of items which the General Committee has recommended for allocation to the Second Committee.

Taking into account the decisions just adopted, may I consider that the General Assembly approves the allocation of the items proposed for the Second Committee in paragraph 46 of the report of the General Committee?

It was so decided.

The President: We turn now to the list of items which the General Committee recommends for allocation to the Third Committee.

Taking into account the decisions just adopted, may I take it that the General Assembly approves the allocation of the items to the Third Committee as proposed in paragraph 46 of the report of the Committee?

It was so decided.

The President: We come now to the list of items which the General Committee recommends for allocation to the Fifth Committee.

Taking into account the decisions just adopted, may I take it that the General Assembly approves the allocation of the items to the Fifth Committee as proposed in paragraph 46 of the report of the General Committee?

It was so decided.

The President: Lastly, we come to the list of items which the General Committee recommends for allocation to the Sixth Committee.

Taking into account the decisions just adopted, may I take it that the General Assembly approves the allocation of the items proposed for the Sixth Committee in paragraph 46 of the report of the General Committee?

It was so decided.

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of the first report of the General Committee.

I wish to thank all members of the Assembly for their cooperation and special understanding. Each Main Committee will receive the list of agenda items allocated

to it so that it may begin its work as soon as possible, in accordance with rule 99 of the rules of procedure.

Before we adjourn, I wish to recall and underline that all meetings must start on time, at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m.

Kindly note that all Main Committees should complete their work by 29 November and that the plenary should recess by 17 December.

I particularly appeal to those Committees which are habitually late to break new ground and join the rest of us in our efforts. I personally intend to ensure that we all keep to the commitment we have undertaken today. This undertaking applies to the Secretariat as well, which must ensure that all documentation is on time, whatever the circumstances.

The meeting rose at 11 a.m.